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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/940,665	08/29/2001	Hajime Yamamoto	011096	4795

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WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP
1250 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, NW
SUITE 700
WASHINGTON, DC 20036

EXAMINER

THORNTON, YVETTE C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1752

DATE MAILED: 08/10/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/940,665	Applicant(s) YAMAMOTO ET AL.	
	Examiner Yvette C. Thornton	Art Unit 1752	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 June 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8, 20, 22 and 24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2, 4-7, 20, 22 and 24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

This is written in reference to application number 09/940665 filed on August 29, 2001.

Request for Continued Examination

1. The request filed on June 25, 2004 for a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) under 37 CFR 1.53(d) based on parent Application No. 09/940665 is acceptable and a RCE has been established. An action on the RCE follows.

Response to Amendment

2. Claims 8-19, 21, 23 and 25 have been cancelled. Claims 1-8, 20, 22 and 24 are currently pending.

3. The amendment to the claims is sufficient to overcome the rejections set forth in the previous action under 35 USC 112, 1st and 2nd paragraphs.

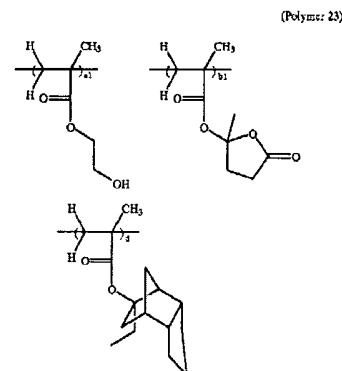
Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

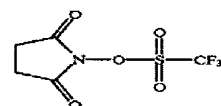
A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

5. Claims 1, 2 and 4-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by Kinsho et al. (US 6,312,867 B1). Kinsho exemplifies in example I-57, a resist

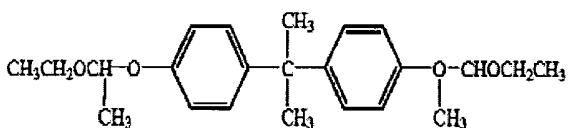


composition comprising (1) polymer 23 having the structure: (a1 = 0.20, b1 = 0.20, d = 0.60, Mw = 10,600) (c.



53, l. 28-50); (2) photoacid generator 8 having the structure: (c. 70, l.

10); (3) dissolution inhibitor 1 having the structure:



; (4) basic compound tributylamine (TBA); and

(5) solvent PGMEA (table 3, c. 73-74). The said composition was spin-coated onto a silicon wafer, then baked on a hot plate, exposed using ArF excimer laser stepper, baked and developed with a solution of TMAH in water to give a positive pattern (c. 70, l. 60-67). See also examples I-59, I-60, III-29, III-31 and III-32. It is the examiner's position that the exemplified polymer meets the limitation of a copolymer of two or more acrylate or methacrylate monomers as set forth in instant claim 4. The exemplified dissolution inhibitor meets the limitations of a compound having the combination of an acetal moiety (one -OCH₃CHOCH₂CH₃ group) and a site, which is eliminated by an acid (the other -OCH₃CHOCH₂CH₃ group). The said moiety is an ethoxyethoxy group which is readily

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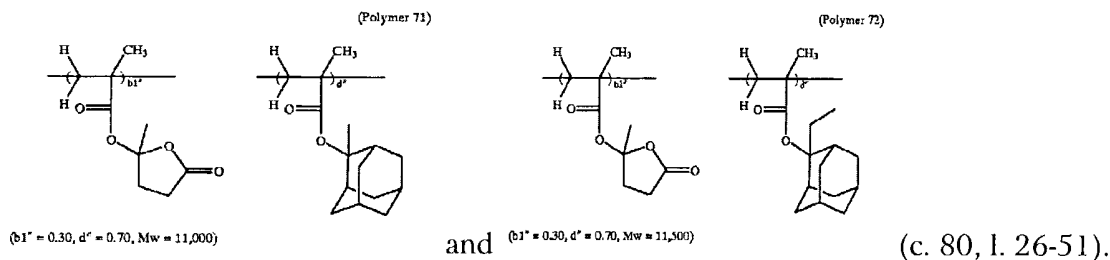
acid labile. The said dissolution inhibitor is capable of producing a ring structure after reacting in the presence of an acid.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

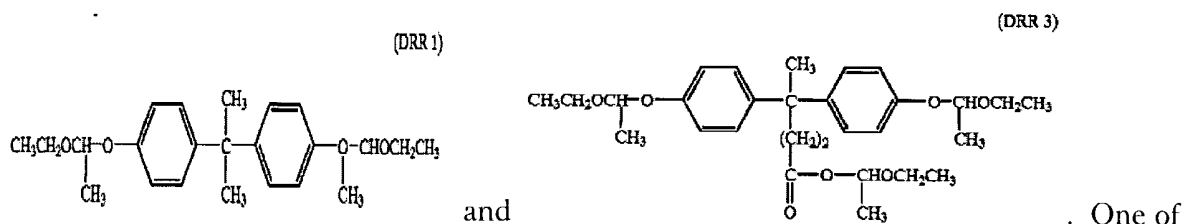
7. Claims 6-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kinsho et al. (US 6,312,867 B1) as applied to claims 1-2 and 4-5 above. Kinsho teaches all the limitations of the instant claims except it fails to exemplify the combination of a copolymer of 2-methyladamantyl methacrylate and gamma-butyrolactone methacrylate with a compound having an acetal moiety and a site, which is eliminated by an acid. Kinsho does however in examples I-7 and I-8, exemplify a resist composition comprising polymers 71 and 72. The said polymers have the following structure respectively:



Kinsho clearly teaches that a dissolution inhibitor may be added to the taught photoresist compositions (c. 29, l. 39-c. 32, l. 45). It is the examiner's position that the exemplified dissolution inhibitors are the preferred compounds. Specifically, compounds

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DRR1 and DRR3 meet the limitations of a compound having the combination of an acetal moiety (one $-\text{OCH}_3\text{CHOCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ group) and a site, which is eliminated by an acid (the other $\text{OCH}_3\text{CHOCH}_2\text{CH}_3$ group). The said moiety is an ethoxyethoxy group which is readily acid labile. The said compounds have the following structures respectively:



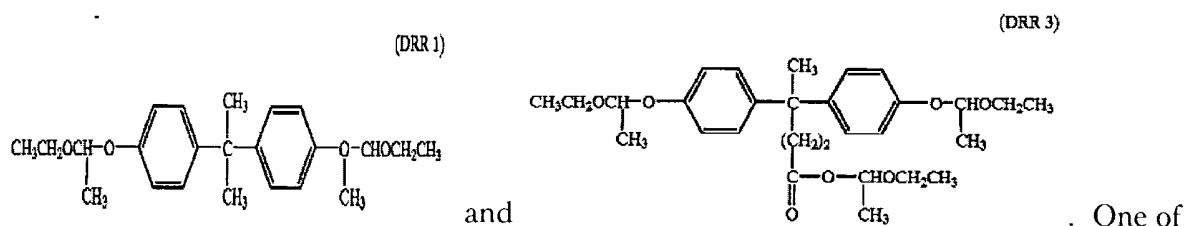
ordinary skill in the art in light of the teachings of Kinsho would have been motivated, as it would have been obvious, to incorporate the exemplified dissolution inhibitors, specifically DRR1 and DRR3 into the exemplified compositions of example I-7 and I-8 in the amount between 5-50 parts by weight in order to improve resolution of the exemplified composition (c. 32, l. 33-40).

8. Claims 1-2, 4-7, 20, 22 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakanishi et al. (US 6,537,726 B2) in view of Kinsho et al. (US 6312867 B1) and Grober et al. (US 6376149 B2). Nakanishi exemplifies in the comparative example a photoresist composition comprising a resin made of 2-methyl-2-adamantyl methacrylate and B-methacryloxyloxy- γ -butyrolactone copolymer (c. 10, l. 7-17); an acid generator, a quencher and a solvent. It is the examiner's position that the comparative example of Kinsho discloses what is well known and conventional in the art.

Kinsho clearly teaches that a dissolution inhibitor may be added to photoresist compositions (c. 29, l. 39-c. 32, l. 45). It is the examiner's position that the exemplified

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dissolution inhibitors of Kinsho are the preferred compounds. Specifically, compounds DRR1 and DRR3 meet the limitations of a compound having the combination of an acetal moiety (one -OCH₃CHOCH₂CH₃ group) and a site, which is eliminated by an acid (the other --OCH₃CHOCH₂CH₃ group). The said moiety is an ethoxyethoxy group which is readily acid labile. The said compounds have the following structures respectively:



ordinary skill in the would have been motivated by the teachings of Kinsho to incorporate the exemplified dissolution inhibitors, DRR1 or DRR3 into the exemplified compositions of Nakanishi in the amount between 5-50 parts by weight in order to improve resolution (see Kinsho c. 32, l. 33-40). The said dissolution inhibitor is capable of producing a ring structure after reacting in the presence of an acid.

Nakanishi teaches that comparative resist composition is spin-coated on a silicon wafer having an organic reflection preventing membrane thereon. The said composition is dried to form a resist film, which is pre-baked and irradiated with an ArF excimer stepper. The exposed wafer was subjected to post-exposure baking on a hot plate. Then the wafer was developed with TMAH for 60 seconds to obtain a line-and-space pattern of 0.18 μm (c. 10, l. 39-67). Although Nakanishi fails to teach a process wherein the formed pattern is transferred to the taught underlying layer, the examiner is of the position that it is well known in the art of semiconductors and microlithography. This position supported by the

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background teachings of Grober which discloses that microlithography is a commonly practiced process of creating a patterned mask on the surface of a semiconductor wafer so that subsequent patterned processes may be performed. Typically these subsequent processes involve the addition or subtraction of material by deposition, implant doping or plasma etching. Frequently, the pattern is transferred from an exposure mask to the wafer using a photoresist layer and optical lithography exposure tools (c. 1, l. 27-35). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to pattern the underlying layer of Nakanishi by using the formed photoresist pattern as it is well known and conventional in the art of microlithography as supported by Grober.

Allowable Subject Matter

9. Claim 3 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

10. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: review of the prior art failed to teach and/or suggest a compound having the given structure of instant claim 3.

Response to Arguments

11. Applicant's arguments with respect to the pending claims have been considered but are of little moment in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Yvette C. Thornton whose telephone number is 571-272-1336. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 8-6:30.

13. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Cynthia H. Kelly can be reached on 571-272-1526. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

14. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Yvette Clarke Thornton
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1752

yct
August 7, 2004